The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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For the Myrtle.

The Fate of Kitty Gray.

A LITTLE kit, demure and gray,
Though sometimes full of pranks and play,
While lying by the fire at rest,
Was heard to say in tones distressed,

"'Tis very hard, with fur like mine,
And lovely eyes that brightly shine,
To be immured in this small room
While other cats are free to roam.

They wisely talk of dogs severe,
Who kits like me, do tease and tear,
But well I know 'tis idle threat,
They've something else than cats to eat.

To-night, when all the house is still,
Forth from this prison, to the hill
Where Mr. Dick in freedom lives
With mistress kind, who to him gives

Full leave to roam where'er he will,
There will I go; and not a gill
Of milk a meal, nor rarest meat
Shall tempt me back to this retreat.

Poor little kit! She left her home,
All heedless of the foes that roam
Intent all innocents to slay,
When from their guardians they stray.

While passing through a lane remote
From help, big Rab with spotted coat,
And teeth untutored thus to play,
With one fierce leap, seized Kitty Gray.

Alas, the little wayward kit!
Her heart forever ceased to beat,
She lay stretched out, bereft of beauty,
And Rab marched off; he'd done his duty,

My children, who this story read,
Shun paths that into dangers lead;
Accept your parents as your guide,
And from the right, step not aside.

Mary Howard, age 13.

For the Myrtle

Frank and Cæsar.

"WHOA Cæsar! Don't be in a hurry, sir! Here's the last of your harness, my fine fellow! Now we are ready. Get up! go long sir!"

But Cæsar didn't seem inclined to move. Just then neighbor Clayton's dog, Prince, came around the corner and gave Cæsar a sniff, which must have meant good morning in their language, then putting their heads together the two dogs held a short consultation and started off at a brisk trot down the highway.

There had been fine sleighing for some weeks and the track was smooth and hard; it didn't seem to be any task for Cæsar to draw the sled to which he was attached, and on which his young master was sitting.

"My! isn't this jolly!" thought Frank, "How we spin!"

At that moment Prince saw some tracks in the snow by the roadside; giving a quick bark

to notify others that there was something worthy of attention, he went to investigate the case. Cæsar, wholly unmindful of his responsibilities, darted after him. Of course the sled was upset, and Master Frank was nearly lost from sight in the deep bank of snow into which he was unceremoniously plunged.

If Cæsar could have spoken no doubt he would have said, "You had your fun a moment ago; I have mine *now*;" but he only stood with drooping head and tail, looking at Frank as if he feared a whipping, while Prince, not being held back by sled and harness, quickly disappeared in the thick woods.

Frank righted his sled, placed himself upon it and told Cæsar to "go on." Cæsar was resolved he wouldn't go on, at least not as Frank wished him to. Frank urged the matter; Cæsar adhered firmly to his resolution. Frank let his temper get the better of him, I am sorry to say, and was just going to strike his poor mute playfellow, when Charlie Clayton caught his upraised hand, and said:

"Don't strike him, Frank! I'll make him go! Here Cæsar, good fellow. Let's have a race."

Setting the example he wished followed, Charlie started into a run. Cæsar appreciated the kind tone and word of praise, and followed Charlie with right good will.

"There!" said Charlie, "you see which works best with him! Cæsar likes to be coaxed as well as I do. I'd do more for one kind word than for forty gruff ones."

Frank learned a good lesson that day, and ever afterwards he treated his dog more kindly, and many a fine time they had together.

One day a sleigh passed our house driven very rapidly; the man in the sleigh was looking behind him as if watching something. In an instant Cæsar came in sight, drawing Frank on his sled and doing his best to catch the horse ahead of him. The man, curious to see how fast the dog could go drawing such a load, urged on his horse, but did not increase the distance between them. The sleigh stopped at a house and there Cæsar caught it, after a race of a mile's length. He entered into the spirit of the time and seemed to enjoy it as much as Frank did.

H. H. D.

SPEAK properly, and in as few words as you can, but speak plainly and truthfully.

Bird Tracks.

WRAP my little Nelly up well
In cloak and leggins and fur;
I'm going down to the brook in the grove,
And I must take Johnny and her.

Johnny has brought his fine new sled—
It is waiting now at the door;
Nelly shall ride, while Johnny, her steed,
Goes prancing along before.

See how the slender icicles hang
From the roof in a glittering row!
See how the silver spangles shine
And sparkle out of the snow!

Nelly's cheeks grow red as a rose
In the fresh, clear, frosty air;
Around the swan's-down edge of her hood
Floats a cloud of golden hair.

Turn in here where the bars are down,
Into the woods so white:
They are hushed and still, for the trees are asleep,
And no living thing in sight.

You can hardly hear the gushing brook
Under the snow so deep;
Its voice is like Nelly's under the quilt,
When she talks to herself in her sleep.

Do you remember the two flat stones,
So near, that we stepped across
To see the robin's nest up in the tree,
And gather the soft green moss?

These are the stones. Don't you think they look
Like pillows soft and white,
Bordered with lace of frostwork, spun
By the fairies, in the night?

Between them, here, for a little space,
We can see the water flow;
The rest of the brook is hidden away
Under the ice and snow.

Come, little Nelly, stand by me,
Close by the water's brink;
For this one break in the ice is the cup
Where all the birdies drink.

See the marks of their dear little feet
Set in a pretty row
Here, on the edge: such tiny tracks,
Laid on the soft white snow!

Crow and robin and bluebird come,
And dear little chick-a-dee-dee;
I think the robin looked up there
To see her nest in the tree.

It is full and piled with fleecy snow,
And an icy spike hangs down;
No room, to-day, for her blue-green eggs,
Nor her downy birdlings brown.

No, Johnny, dear, you need not climb
To bring us the frozen nest;
We will leave it here for another spring—
The robin would like that best.

Sit down again, little Nell, on the sled,
For now it is time to go;
When the birdies come again, they will find
Our larger tracks in the snow.

Mary E. Atkinson.

A Family Treasure.

OH dear me!" said Frank, with such a face and tone that one would have thought him in serious trouble.

It was a beautiful Sunday morning in June; and the little boy sat on the door-step, with the fragrant prairie-rose twining the latticed porch, and swaying its clustering blossoms in the western breeze, that played with his curly hair. Birds warbled joyously all about him, amid the green foliage; and on beyond the western slope, a blue, silvery river wound its shining way, till hidden in the distance by wooded hills.

Just across the bend was the white village, and in full view, the ivy-mantled church, from whose belfry would soon ring pleasantly on the summer air the call to glad worship of that loving Father who made our earth beautiful and bright,—"made it so beautiful that we might live worthily on it," and find thus the way to that even better home where his children see his face.

"What is the matter, Frank?" asked Mrs. Weldon, as she came up the garden-walk, drawing the baby's carriage. Frank colored slightly, but replied,—

"I don't like learning Bible verses, mother."

Mrs. Weldon sat down beside him, lifting the laughing, crowing little one into her lap, and putting in the tiny, out-reached hand a spray of prairie-roses.

"How many have you learned?" she asked.

"All," Frank replied, "I am just through. Will you hear me say them, mother?"

Frank's lesson was the beatitudes. His mother did not need the book; she knew, and dearly loved, every one of the beautiful verses; and her daily effort was to have their spirit wrought into her life. He repeated them all correctly; and when he came to the last,—

"Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake," she said,—

"That reminds me of a little story which I shall have time to tell you before church.

"You know what persecution means, and something of the old-time martyrs, who endured all manner of suffering and loss, and even laid down their lives, rather than disown their Saviour in word or act. In a time of persecution in France, there was a certain family who had a cricket of which they were strangely careful. But it was not, like most things people keep for 'best,' brought out for company, and put away at other times. On the contrary, it was always kept in some obscure, unnoticed place when company or strangers were likely to come to the house, and in every-day use when the family were alone.

"They used it in a singular way, too; they would lay it in their laps, *upside down*, and bend over it with eager, absorbed attention.

"Why did they value it so highly? Was it an heirloom, of curious pattern or tapestry, handed down from generation to generation, with a story to tell? Was there some family association linked with it, of generous deed, or narrow escape from peril? Was it wrought or covered by dear hands that had since completed their life-work, and been folded on a pulseless breast, beneath the springing grass and daisies?

"None of these. The secret was this: A book was fastened inside, in such a way as to be wholly concealed while the cricket stood upright, and yet every leaf could be turned and read. You know that book could only have been the Bible. It was then forbidden in France; and that family kept and read it at the risk of their property, personal liberty, and even lives.

"After a while, they left their old home, among the vine-clad hills and sunny valleys of France —beautiful and dear as it was,—and sailed to America, where they could, in freedom and peace, read that loved Bible, worship, and live according to its teachings. That very Bible is now owned by some of their descendants, a family in Western Pennsylvania."

Frank's face grew bright with interest as he listened to this *true* story.

"Think, my boy," his mother said gently, "of the difference between their lot and our own. Here we sit, in the pleasant sunshine, with beauty, fragrance, and music all around us,—with none to molest or make us afraid,—and read that Book when we will. But my little boy 'don't' like to learn Bible verses."—*The Day-spring.*

YOU can never catch the word that has once gone out of your lips. Once spoken, it is out of your reach; try your best, you can never recall it. Therefore, take care what you say. Never speak an unkind word, an impure word, a profane word.

For the Myrtle.

Baby's Cure.

TAKE your blocks my little Allie,
Go and build for me a house,
Mother's sick and wants her baby
To be quiet as a mouse.

Oh! the love and childish pity
In his look, no words can tell,
As he clasped me tightly, saying,
"Want to tiss her, make her well!"

H. H. D.

The Crust of Bread.

I MUST not throw upon the floor
The crust I cannot eat;
For many little hungry ones
Would think it quite a treat.

For wilful waste makes woeful want,
And I may live to say,
Oh, how I wish I had the bread
That once I threw away

For the Myrtle.

Pet Lambs and Poetry.

LILY and May were two little girls, not sisters or cousins even, but very dear friends, and as their homes were only a short distance apart, they were much together. Neither had ever any fruit, or confectionary without sharing it with the other; and the parents of both little girls never bought a toy, or article of clothing for one, unless for both.

One day May's papa called them to the barn, and they were very much surprised and delighted to see there, two little lambs, and to hear him say:

"You may have these little lambs for your own if you will always take good care of them; and in two weeks from now, you must each of you make up a verse about them, and without any help from any one. By that time you will learn their ways and it will be easier for you." Then he left the little girls alone with their lambs.

"How funny," said Lily, "that your papa always asks us to reckon what the things cost that he buys, or tell how they are made, or where they grow, and now he wants us to make up some poetry. Oh, my!"

May laughed one of her silvery, rippling laughs, then said:

"Papa asks us to do these things so we will learn, and—and—make smart women like our mammas, I s'pose."

"Yes, and now we must feed our lambies," said Lily, "and tie a ribbon around their necks. I will tie a blue one on my lamb's neck."

"I will tie a pink one around my lambie's neck," added May.

After they were fed and ribboned, the little girls proceeded to name them, but they were obliged to think a long time before they found names that suited them. At length they christened their pets Lulu and Nina, the former belonging to May, the latter to Lily.

The lambs thrived finely, and when two weeks had passed would follow them anywhere, running, skipping, and bounding along by their side. The little girls often played in the dirt, making dirt houses, and the lambs followed their example, (only they did not make houses,) and got their wool very dirty, and the little girls used to wash them every day, until finding it did no good, they gave it up.

"We could not say in our verse that our lamb's fleece was white as snow, like Mary's lamb, could we, Lily?" asked May.

"No," replied Lily, "but I have my verse all ready to say to your papa, have you, May?"

"Yes, and here he comes. Papa, will you hear us repeat our verses now?"

"Oh, yes; I am very anxious to hear them," was the reply.

"Please say yours first, Lily," said May. So Lily began:

"May and Lily had each a lamb,
With fleeces black as dirt,
And everywhere that either went,
The lambs were sure to flirt."

"Now May, yours," said her papa.

"Lily and May had both a lamb,
With fleeces black as mud,

And everywhere they ever went,
The lambs were sure to scud."

"Good," said papa, taking a little girl on each shoulder and carrying them to each member of both families, to repeat their poetry.

S Frances Page.

The Dress-Maker.

"Both perfect fits, as snug as wax, and made so beautifully," said Mrs. Leverson, as her two daughters come into her room, to let her see if they were "all right" for the l rge party to which they were going that night.

Then they passed into the parlor, where their two gallants were waiting to escort them. As the hack was dashing down the street of the gay city, between the bright gas-lamps on either side, Miss Essie, the elder sister, asked the gentleman who sat next her to order the driver to stop before the dimly-lighted cottage to the right.

"Why, Miss Essie, you don't expect to find our party in such a place as that, surely?" said the astonished beau.

"No," she replied, "we only wish to speak a moment to the lady who lives there."

They were handed out, and tapped softly at the door, and the tall lady in black, who had sent their dresses home but two hours before, with a greatly surprised look invited them in, looking around on her little, plain, stiff chairs as if they were not good enough for such fine birds to light on.

"You must excuse ns for interrupting you at this hour, but we wished to hand you this," putting some money into her hand, "and to tell you how much pleased we are with your work, as well as fitting," said the elder.

"And will you pl ase accept something which I thought you might relish," said Miss Orlene, putting a basket of good things into her hand. "We are afraid you sit too closely over your needle. When you can do so, we will be so glad to have you come and see us. We have plenty of books, flowers, and music, and a quiet pleasant lawn, in which you may be able to find some roses for your cheeks."

When the young ladies le't, the lonely woman sat down to her sewing-table, and the tears trickled through the thin fingers on which the weary head rested.

But they were not those hot ters which seem to scald the eye and brain, nor did they leave those little thumping hammers in the temples, which unkind words and acts will do, from those we try ever so hard to please.

No; they were tears of joy, which made her heart lighter, to think some one, in that great, cold, strange city, cared for the friendless dress-maker. Some one pitied her pale cheeks, and thought she might like something better than "tea and crackers."

In the eyes of these kind young ladies, she was something more than an iron sewing-machine, without flesh and blood and feeling!

Oh, isn't it nice to feel that you are thought of kindly by some one! That when you are under the sod, some gentle hand will plant a flower over your breast, and say: "I loved her!"

And just to think how very easy it is to make others happy, and how seldom we take the pains to do those little things which can make a heart lighter.

Well, the young ladies' gallants had so much curiosity that they never rested until they found out what in the world could stop two such belles as they were, on the way to a party; and when you next meet those gentlemen, you may ask them if they thought any the less of the Misses Leverson for stooping to notice a poor dress-maker.—*Young Reaper.*

For the Myrtle.

A Swarm of Be's from the Bible.

A RECITATION FOR SIX LITTLE GIRLS.

First. Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one for another.

Second. Be followers of God as dear children.

Third. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.

Fourth. Be content with such things as ye have.

Fifth. Be not weary in well-doing.

Sixth. Be at peace among yourselves.

First. Be temperate. Be faithful.

Second. Be gentle. Be prayerful.

Third. Be honest. Be discreet.

Fourth. Be forgiving. Be meek.

Fifth. Be patient. Be sober.

Sixth. Be affectionate one to another.

All in Concert. Be ye also perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.

Arranged by L. F.

THE truly happy are those who love God.

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—Tne Sunday School at Somerville held a fine entertainment at Warren Hall, on two evenings, beginning Feb. 1st. The gathering was very large on both evenings, the tableaux, dialogues, music, &c., excellent, and the result in money satisfactory.

NEW YORK.

—The Sabbath School at Cortland was lately organized, with few scholars and doubtful prospects. But it has continued, thanks to faithful workers, to grow in numbers and interest, until its influence is felt throughout the town. Its Christmas exhibition has since been repeated with great success, and the two entertainments have given them a return of a hundred dollars, beside the good wrought by the entertainment which was of the best religious character.

VERMONT.

—Festivals seem the order in our Vermont societies. One was holden at Felchville, another at Woodstock, on the same day, Jan. 19, the receipts of each being over two hundred dollars. Jan. 24, the Sunday School at Chester had its annual reunion at the residence of its superintendent, Bro. N. A Smith. The large house was filled with children, and parents, and friends,—about two hundred persons. A tableau, two charades, a piece written for the occasion, creditably performed by some of the young people, refreshments, novel amusements, and excellent music, made the occasion very pleasant. Altogether, it was a rare occasion, enjoyed alike by young and old. The Sunday School at Ludlow is also prospering finely.

CONNECTICUT.

—The faithful pastor of the church at New Haven, Mrs. Hanaford, writes to the *Banner:* "I believe no one has told you what a fine exhibition we had in Music Hall, Jan. 10th, under the efficient direction of the acting Superintendent of our Sabbath School, Miss Ellen E. Miles. It put the nice little sum of $80.00 into our treasury, and showed that there was much native talent among our people, young and old. That 'Mission of the Fairies' is a pleasant little drama with a fine moral, and with the addition of the little temperance farce, 'A Drop too much,' would be a sufficient evening entertainment. The right to use this pleasant little dramatic representation, with full directions in regard to costume, tableaux, &c., &c., may be obtained of Mr. J. H. Crocket, Portland, Me., for a reasonable sum. Miss Miles wrote for directions, but, by mistake, they did not come till after the exhibition, so she was obliged to use her own judgment and taste in regard to costumes and other arrangements, and the result proved that they were amply sufficient. Never did fairies look more beautiful."

OHIO.

—The *Star* says our church work and Sunday School work are just at their beginning in Conover, but they must be carried on. They have as yet no pastor, but the faithful ones have banded together and built a beautiful house of worship as well as organized a branch of the invisible church.

—Our friends in Cleaveland will soon have a Sabbath home. They have purchased an unfinished church which will be finished as soon as the weather permits. We hope to hear of that Sunday School in its new quarters before long.

—We learn from the *Star* that the members of the Sunday School connected with our church at Leroy, gave an exhibition on Thursday and Friday evenings, Feb. 1st and 2d. The entertainment was a success in every sense. The speaking and singing was commendable, and the order of arrangement such as to effect great credit upon all interested, and especially upon the worthy Superintendent, Bro. A. Alexander, to whose earnest efforts the present prosperous condition of our school in this place is largely due. The receipts were $80.50, and will be expended in increasing the library.

The Myrtle a Missionary.

A Christian missionary is one who goes about to enlighten people upon the great subject of Christian truth. All Christian churches send out their missionaries into the world, and great good has been done by many of them.

A religious book or paper may be a missionary. It may be carried about and read, and may enlighten and bless many minds. We desire to have our MYRTLE a missionary. We want it to go about into our homes and Sunday Schools, or wherever it can find its way among the children and youth. We hope that those who can will loan their papers to their neighbors, and that some who are able to do so, will take an extra copy of the MYRTLE to lend or to give away. It is a little paper, to be sure, but who can tell what a great work it may yet do? Circulate it; keep it at work wherever you can.

Victory over Death.

Death has been called "the king of terrors." The thought of dying often occasions fear and sadness. It comes and takes from us the dear and loved ones, the parent, brother, sister, children, companion and friend. Strong as the tie may be which bind us together, they are broken. "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." The dead will not return to us; but we shall go to them.

But death is not the king of terrors to those who have true Christian hope. Christ has been victorious over death. This is what the Bible tells us: "Death, the last enemy shall be destroyed.—There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor sighing, nor any more pain." Let us seek to have this hope in Christ of victory over death, so that we may say when death comes to us, "This king of terrors is the Prince of Peace."

The Dying Man and His Hope.

A company of travellers was once journeying along a desert road. Among them was a worthy Christian missionary. As they went on their journey, a poor old man who was with them was overcome by heat and fatigue, and sinking down was left to perish on the road. The missionary saw him, and kneeling down by his side when the others had passed along, whispered in his ear: "Brother, what is your hope?" The dying man raised himself a little, and answered: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," and immediately expired with the effort. The missionary was astonished at this answer, and from the calm appearance of the man, he felt assured that he had died happy, trusting in Christ as his Saviour. How, or where he thought, could this man, apparently a heathen, have got this hope? And as he mused upon it, he observed a piece of paper grasped tightly in the hand of the dead man. On examination he found that it was a single leaf of the Bible, containing the first chapter of the first epistle of St. John, in which these words are found.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXXVI

THE STRAIT GATE.

"Blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved."

SCRIPTURE, — Luke xiii. 22–30.

Question. — As Jesus was journeying to Jerusalem, what question did one ask him?

Answer. — Luke xiii. 23.

NOTE. This man, without question, was a Jew who had been listening to his discourses.

Q. — What did Jesus urge him to do?

A. — Luke xiii. 24.

NOTE. The phrase "strait gate," may be more properly translated, narrow door. The way of entrance was narrow but there was plenty of room within the door. It was the narrow way of faith in Jesus as the Son of God and faithfulness to him in deed and word.

Q. — Why should he strive to enter the narrow door?

A. — Luke xiii. 24, 25.

NOTE. The kingdom of heaven is frequently likened to a feast. And the master of the house at the proper time, closes the door, and all who come thereafter will not be recognized as members of his household and company.

Q. — Will it be enough to say that they have held worldly relations with the Lord?

A. — Luke xiii. 26, 27.

NOTE. The Saviour was referring to the time when the kingdom of heaven which the Jews expected to enjoy exclusively, should be taken from them and given to the Gentiles. They wished to ever be the favorites of heaven, and they would be disappointed and grieved and indignant when the Gentile world should inherit the promises.

Q. — What should grieve and vex them?

A. — Luke xiii. 28.

Q. — From what directions should men come into the kingdom of God?

A. — Luke xiii. 29.

Q. — Should the Jews or the Gentiles be the first to inherit the kingdom?

A. — Luke xiii. 30.

Q. — Shall any Jews or Gentiles be finally lost?

A. — Rom. xi. 1, 11, 12, 25, 26, 32, 36.

Riddle Box

Enigma.

In my name there are fourteen letters.

1. The land of Haran's nativity.
2. The great river of Egypt.
3. The prophet, son of Amos.
4. A vessel of the temple service.
5. A town of lower Egypt.
6. A deity worshipped at Damascus.
7. The country "between two rivers."
8. The daughter of Laban.
9. The husband of Naomi.
10. One of the "cities of the plain."
11. A Christian convert of Corinth.
12. A chief defeated by Gideon.
13. The owner of a vineyard desired by Ahab.
14. The pro-consul of Cyprus.

Bible Questions.

1. Where was that mountain that was full of horses and chariots of fire round about a certain prophet?
2. What mountain was that which was bought for a great nation, and to which it was brought by God?
3. What mountain was that upon which a great city was built?
4. What mountain is that which is to be divided, and half of it to be removed toward the north, and half of it toward the south?
5. Who was taken up into a high mountain and saw all the kingdoms of the world?
6. What four persons went up into a high mountain, and there met two more? What were all their names?

Answers.

FEB. 24. The Good Shepherd.

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